

Central Coventry Fire District

Board Meeting

July 12, 2013 – 7:30 p.m.

1691 Flat River Rd.

Minutes

1. Call to Order – 7:33 p.m.

2. Roll Call

President Elect: Fred P. Gralinski

Vice President Elect: Marie A. Baker

Directors: – Cynthia A. Fagan-Perry, Robert G. Hadley, Maureen K. Jendzejec,

Daniel K. Lantz, Jr., Helen G. Quinn

Treasurer:

Tax Collector:

Clerk: Christine Moniz

Chief: Andrew J. Baynes

President of the Union Dave Gorman

Also in attendance - members of the public, and Fire Department

Approval of the Minutes of previous meeting - July 3, 2013 minutes

were approved with the change in wording from larger to smaller. The motion was made to approve the minutes by Director Fagan-Perry and seconded by Director Jendzejec.

All Voted Aye.

The July 5, 2013 minutes motion to table by Director Fagan-Perry until Monday, July 15, 2013. Seconded by Director Hadley.

All Voted Aye.

Election of the Board President and Vice President – Motion was made by Director Hadley to ratify the election of President Gralinski and Vice President Baker on July 3, 2013. This was seconded by Director Fagan-Perry. All voted aye and the motion was carried.

Director Hadley made a motion to move item #5 executive session to the end of the meeting and it was seconded by Director Fagan-Perry.

All voted Aye.

Appointment of Committees - The appointment of committees were made and ratified at tonight's meeting. They are as follows:

Equipment and Building Committee – Director Lantz, Jr. & Director Fagan-Perry

Finance Committee – Director Hadley & Director Jendzejec

Alternative Planning Committee – V.P Baker, Director Lantz

Director Fagan-Perry & Director Quinn - appointed as the liaison for

the By-Law, Charter Review and Litigation Review

Director Quinn was appointed as Review Judge Stern Directive and all open meetings and setting up.

Motion made by Director Hadley for the approval of the appointments and Seconded by Director Fagan-Perry.

All Voted Aye

The update on the MERS – A motion was made to table the update by Director Hadley and Seconded by Director Fagan-Perry and V.P. Baker.

All Voted Aye.

Discussion of the Tower Ladder #3 – President Gralinski moved into discussion of the Tower Ladder and thanked Union President Gorman for bringing the Tower for everyone to see.

Chief Baynes was asked to give the group some information on the Tower. The Chief gave a quick synopsis and explained it was the same one he had provided the Judge back in April. A Copy was passed to the Board and it reads as follows:

TOWER LADDER 3 ANALYSIS, TOWN_WIDE AERIAL CAPABILITIES and OVERALL FIREGROUND OPERATIONS

To be able to fully understand the need for “Ladder or Truck” work within any discussion to decide the acquisition and/or retention of a piece of apparatus, in this case, a brief explanation of fireground hierarchy of goals and fire dynamics is needed.

Fireground tasks are always listed within a clearly defined series of goals, while the achievement of these goals may not always happen within the same order from incident to incident.

Life Safety is our primary and first goal always...physical search and rescue of occupants.

Incident Stabilization, the mitigation or confinement of the incident is our second goal, although it may occur concurrently with the first and/or in support of it...thermal and atmospheric control and the application of extinguishing agents to aid and permit physical search and rescue.

Property Conservation is our third and last goal...the extinguishment and salvage and overhaul of property and contents.

Fire dynamics and thermal presentation are scientific realities that must be dealt with at every incident, no matter if it is in New York City, Paris, or Coventry.

Fire forces need to bring control to chaotic and uncontrollable “work sites” by relying on providing their own reliable breathing air, water supply, lighting, electrical supply and atmospheric control. Each occupancy presents different challenges in accomplishing the Three Fireground Goals listed earlier.

Atmospheric control includes the ability to release vertically, and sometimes horizontally toxic products of combustion such as carbon

monoxide, and/or cyanide to ensure a survivable atmosphere for civilians and firefighters alike, as well as the release, in a controlled manner, the release of thermal energy, (ie. Smoke, heat, and gases) away from uninvolved areas to potentiate the search and rescue of victims trapped within a structure.

So an analysis of the aerial capabilities Town wide must take these items into effect, as well as a number of other factors, such as infrastructure, roadway configurations, housing stock, street setbacks, high hazard properties, and specialized needs.

The three aerial units available at this time consist of a 75', rear mount, steel standard duty, "straight stick" aerial device with a pre-piped waterway in Hopkins Hill's District; a 100', rear mount, aluminum standard duty, "straight stick" aerial device with a pre-piped waterway in the Coventry Fire District; and a 100', rear mount, steel heavy duty, "tower ladder, platform" device with a pre-piped water way and breathing air.

The Hopkins's Hill unit has a 75' foot maximum vertical reach at 75 degrees of elevation and an approximate 50' horizontal reach at 15 degrees, has a tip weight capacity of nominally 500# dry and 250# with the waterway in operation.

The Coventry unit has a maximum 100' vertical reach at 75 degrees of elevation, an approximately 80' horizontal reach at 15 degrees, has a tip weight capacity of nominally 500# dry and 250# with the waterway in operation. Of note also, due to its' aluminum construction, the last fly section is the narrowest allowable under the applicable standards.

CCFD's unit has a maximum 100' vertical reach at 75 degrees of

elevation, and approximate 88' reach horizontally at 15 degrees, has and ability to reach minus 10 degrees below with the same capabilities, has a platform capacity of 1250# dry and 1000# with the waterway in operation.

All aerial units, regardless of size have infrastructure challenges and road challenges simply due to the aged roadways and extreme road surface pitches encountered in the Northeast, however all are capable of overcoming and making adjustments as needed, in most circumstances.

Housing setbacks present a variety of challenges in every sector of this Town, not to dissimilar to many communities, so horizontal reach is a prime selection issue when coupled with the post 1970's proliferation of "lightweight truss roof" systems makes the ability to work off portable ground or roof ladders more difficult than in earlier building styles.

The least desirable usage of an aerial device is the removal, or rescue of civilian personnel, simple due to the fact that it is labor intensive, in a time when staffing is at a minimum and climbing a ladder is a dangerous and difficult maneuver in ideal conditions at best. A platform device provides the capability of removing multiple people at the same time and the option of bringing them down mechanically, while also leaving the option of a pathway open to utilize the ladder for climbing, if needed.

Finally, water flow capabilities between these three devices are dramatic, 1000gpm in the first two vs. 2000gpm in the later.

CCFD has a number of high hazard classified properties, four mill

complexes in active use, one being converted to condominiums currently, a five story hotel, two four story health care facilities and two multi-story apartment complexes, as well as the high school campus.

ISO effects of a lack of aerial capacity are yet to be determined, but will undoubtedly have a negative effect.

As you will note by the attached drill invitation sent to the surrounding District's on 8 March of this year, I attempted to gauge the aerial capabilities and abilities through a planned sequence of structured drills. Only the Coventry District responded and participated. Western Coventry indicated a desire to provided tanker service on the planned live burn component, but that was cancelled due to the 26 March rejection of the presented budget. It should also be noted that Western has no aerial capability and relies upon assistance from the surrounding departments.

Finally, with all the above taken into account and with the reality of not having an internal ability to provide staffing for this unit for a guaranteed capability, I must reluctantly concede that it is an extremely valuable asset that is not going to utilized with our present or foreseeable deployment of personnel and therefore should be returned to offset the debt service the District is carrying.

We will be forced to rely upon the other available units, in spite of their sporadic staffing, availability, and capabilities and will have to automatically factor this needed capability into our incident risk analysis as a possibility not a certainty and plan accordingly to minimize taxpayer and firefighter hazards as best as possible.

President Gralinski asked if anyone could give the Board and the Public some insight as to why it was important for CCFD to purchase the Tower in the first place. Union President Gorman stepped forward to give the background on the Tower. He provided the Board the union's objections to the court and it explains the use of the truck. He also stated that he was not on the committee to speck out the truck he was however on the Health and Safety committee to ensure the truck met all the requirements to the safety of our firefighters. Quick historical account the minutes from 2009 where the Board had made a motion to purchase the Tower. This purchase was made due to the fact after the merge CCFD had two straight stick ladders. One had failed to tip test and the ladder test and was placed out of service. In 2009 the second truck also failed it's ladder test and was removed out of service due to the age of the truck. It was in service for NYC then refurbished and purchased by CCFD. The district needed another truck. With looking at several types the committee agreed to purchase the Tower from Pierce considering it was already built and had all the bells and whistles and was less than building a new ladder. The safety features were also a huge factor in the purchase of this Tower. The ability for the further reach was also one of the reasons it was purchased. There was a question as to how many streets the Tower cannot go down and we have only 7 in town that we cannot access. That also includes the other two ladders in town. Union President Gorman also explained that the Tower is just another tool that we use for deployment of man power, water & tools,

in case of emergency's from house fires, water rescues, and low angle rescues. It is safer to use the Tower for rescue or removal of a person or even animal. It also makes sense to use the Tower for venting a truss roof as to using a straight stick.

The other key factor for keeping this Tower is we do not have the ability to transport a ladder any longer than 24 feet. If we need to ladder a roof that is higher than that we have to wait for an incoming ladder from another district or another City or Town.

Mr. Gizzarelli, a former CCFD Board member, made a statement as to why he voted yes on the Tower. It was a safety factor for the Firefighters and the public. His idea is to re-finance the Tower and make the payments more frequent instead of once a year. Also instead of a ten year lease make it 15.

The Chief was asked by President Gralinski what was the date that he took the Tower out of service and Chief stated March 28th that was also the day he shut down three stations. The Tower went out of service due to lack of manpower.

Mr. Scott inquired about how many times we sent out Rescue to West Warwick. The Chief indicated that it is not always our Rescue that responds it is usually the one from Coventry Fire. To which is the 2nd ladder in Town that will be unmanned due to the fact they are not even in service or in quarters they are out mutual aide.

A member of the public asked how much we still owe on the Tower and that we need to also consider that we have to buy a Rescue in the future and also an Engine in the near future and that we need to think about that. Do we really need a Tower we need a rescue and engine even more

Karen Carson addressed Board just to clarify we are talking Central Coventry but basically we are a Town we have different fire district but we are a Town with a lot of equipment. In this Town how many ladder trucks do we have. The Chief answered three. Western has none, Coventry has one, Hopkins Hill has one and Central Coventry Fire District has one. Back to Ms. Carson so the big one counts as one truck if we get rid of it we have two in Town then she asked how many runs has the ladder been on since 2009. At that time the Chief could not answer. Union President Gorman stated about 300 a year then the crowd laughed. She then stated that it is rather sounds stupid she wanted to know why we send out an engine and a rescue to one call. The Chief stated that all of our crews are ALS and trucks are ALS. She asked if the Tower is ALS equipped and the Chief stated no. Also asked was when do all three trucks go out the Chief stated never. If we send back the ladder truck we have two ladders in town technically and how are often are all three deployed chief stated never. Usually we deploy two. Is it conceivable to keep this town safe even if we send the Tower back. Is it cost effective to send the Truck back we can save a lot of money and help out the tax payers.

The Chief stated he is ok with seeing the Tower go. He can't man the Tower he is not happy about it but he is ok.

Mr. Assalone also wanted to make a comment that there is nothing safer as far as right now there is nothing safer than a truly rehabbed building , mill, with the fire codes we have right now and all the dry systems and wet systems. As far as old mills we may get some fires. In the new mills by the time we get there they will be out.

Union President Gorman stated that the Chief may want to send the Tower back the public may want to send the Tower back and he is the only one that does not want to send the ladder back. It all boils down to a safety factor. He cares about going home at the end of the day along with the rest of his men.

V.P Baker also asked about a letter that we received from West Warwick where they will no longer deploy a Tower to our Town for every call.

Mr. Steve Fay addressed the public explaining the use of the ladder and also the lack of our ability to bring anything higher than a 24 foot ladder. He explained that CCFD will no longer have the ability to reach anything higher than a small two story framed home. He also mentioned the 2003 Station Fire and how Warwick Fire used a Ladder truck to pull people out. They used it as a tool.

V.P. Baker asked about the Station tour she wanted to know how many gallons of water does the ladder truck holds and the Chief stated 300 gallons. The V.P. asked if we send a ladder to a fire are we using it just as a ladder. The Chief mentioned that we can also tie into a hydrant with it and pump if we have to.

Mr. Gralinski wanted to know where our line ends in the Center of New England it is close to Walmart. We respond to the land but Hopkins Hill responds to the building. The fire districts that cover that are is East Greenwich, Hopkins Hill, a little bit of CCFD and West Greenwich.

Mr. Pasquale, member of the public stated that we replaced a 100 foot ladder with another 100 foot ladder. We did not get anything bigger. The difference is this ladder has a greater reach and can do so much more. So basically we replaced what we had. He also stated that we never pull right up to a building so the ladder needs a great reach. With the old seagraves we did not have the same reach and it also needed more support than the Tower. The new ladder has a greater reach and has more capabilities than an old straight stick truck. It would make more sense to keep the tower for the reach ability since so many houses are so far off the main road. The Chief agreed.

Mr. Doug Alrich asked where is the old ladder truck. The Chief stated he has no idea. Was it sold or repaired. Someone may have bought it

and fix for shows or parades. President Gralinski stated that if the ladder fails then we can no longer use it. Doug also asked why do we have a fire truck to transport ALS equipment why don't we use a smaller truck. The Chief explained that if we get another call and it is a fire then we would not have the ability to respond to that call without water.

With more discussion on the floor the Board took the public comments under advisement and Director Fagan-Perry made a motion to close the session and it was seconded by Director Quinn.
All Voted Aye.

Director Lantz moved into discussion on the Station Tour. A motion was made to table discussion and also to table executive session. The motion was made at 9:10 by Director Fagan-Perry and Seconded by V.P. Baker
All Voted Aye.

Motion made to adjourn the meeting made by Director Fagan-Perry and Seconded by Director Baker and Director Quinn
All Voted Aye

Meeting was adjourned at 9:11 p.m.